

I have been a part of the evaluation committee in my district for over six years. Six years ago we re-wrote the existing evaluation package and successfully implemented it during 2009-2010 through 2012-2013. For many teachers it was the first time that administrators had followed a process that required in-classroom observations. It also provided the opportunity for teachers to select from twelve different professional goals to demonstrate success. The CCT was used as the basis for this process.

Last year, the district evaluation committee decided to accept the SEED process for evaluation and there have been extensive problems, many due to the use of Bloomboard as the data collection method. Other issues have stemmed from the implementation prior to the report from the State of the review of the Pilot program in 2012-2013. Although we provided extensive professional development for our teaching staff, it became clear that clarity was not part of the process. Teachers in traditional classroom settings could more easily apply the process, but that is less than the majority of teachers in the district. Many teachers did not find themselves able to adapt to the requirements and struggles for not only teachers, but also administrators created angst and frustration at every turn. Attempts to correct problems by the district committee were often met with roadblocks both from the Bloomboard technology, training interpretations by administrators that did not align with the language of SEED, re-working forms to assist teachers in meeting criteria, and constant changes being sent by SDE. Within the district, the common difficulty resulted from the varying interpretations that the administrators were making and implementing in the 12 schools without consistency of message. Even meetings with representatives from the SDE resulted in change after change as the process was implemented this year.

Now the whole concept has changed in an effort to address the basic fact that this process CANNOT WORK!! Not only is there no alignment between the administrators' side and the teachers' side, but there is not enough time in the day/year for an administrator to effectively complete the paperwork/meetings required. Even if the "options" provided were adopted, the reality is still that it CANNOT WORK!! Additionally, asking districts to notify the SDE of the selected "options" before the actual official changes have been made (CCT revision) is absurd! The process may have been broken in some districts, but it certainly was working well in others. Until the whole process is proved to work effectively without the excessive time consumption on the part of teachers and administrators, the state should not require it to be part of a district's evaluation plans.

Speaking of time consumption, teachers are spending anywhere from 4 hours to 12 hours in preparation for an in-classroom observation. If this time were spent in preparing to teach students, the progress that the evaluation plan seeks to improve might actually show some improvement! Asking teachers to select an SLO designed by an administrator with no evidence of need is ridiculous. Teachers should be ones determining the needs of students and then administrators, and then districts should develop the goals, not the other way around. The percentage of increase in student progress also should be determined by the teacher not an administrator, especially one new to the school/district!

I could elaborate more on every aspect of this evaluation process, but the most important thing to realize is it DOES NOT AND CANNOT WORK as designed.

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